# GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
# CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
# LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4236
ANSWERED ON:28.03.2017
Sale of Essential Commodities
Dhruvanarayana Shri Rangaswamy

**Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:**

(a) whether the Government plans to utilize the vast network of post offices across the country to sell subsidised pulses, if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;
(b) whether the Government has also reviewed the availability and prices of essential commodities and decided to release more essential commodities from buffer stock to ensure their availability through retail distribution at reasonable prices during the season, if so, the details thereof;
(c) whether the Government has reviewed the prices of pulses, sugar and other essential commodities, if so, the details thereof; and
(d) the measures undertaken by the Government to protect the consumers from high prices along with the details of prices of pulses, sugar and other essential commodities during the last three years?

## Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI C. R. CHAUDHARY)
(a) : Distribution of pulses through branches of Post Offices in the country is one of the options available to the Government to improve outreach and coverage for market intervention.
(b) : The Government is monitoring the prices and availability of essential commodities. During 2016-17, Government of India has so far allocated 628.91 lakh tonnes of foodgrains under National Food Security Act (NFSA), other welfare schemes and additional allocation including festival, calamity etc. Besides, FCI through Open Market Sale Scheme (Domestic) has sold 45.67 lakh tonnes of wheat out of Central Pool to enhance the supply and moderate the open market prices.

In addition, allocation of around 54,160 tonnes pulses were made to States/UTs/agencies from the buffer stock of pulses for direct retailing by them. Also, 46088 tonnes of pulses were auctioned in open market.
(c)& (d) : The Government is closely monitoring the prices of essential commodities including pulses and sugar. The details of prices of some of the commodities over last three years are given at Annexure.
The measures taken by Government from time to time to stabilize prices of essential food items inter-alia, include creation of buffer stock of pulses for effective market intervention; appropriately utilizing trade and fiscal policy instruments like import and export duty, Minimum Export Price, export restrictions etc.to regulate domestic availability and moderate prices; imposition of stock limits, provision of higher Minimum Support Prices to incentivize farmers for increasing production etc.
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